

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT.

(A)—ESTABLISHMENTS.

57. The superior forest staff allotted to the Northern Circle consists of 1 Conservator of Forests, with 13 Deputy and Assistant Conservators of Forests, for the administration of the forests of 12 divisions.

58. Mr. W. H. A. Wallinger, Deputy Conservator of Forests, 1st Grade, returned from furlough in the month of October 1886, but his health failed again in the voyage out, and he had to take sick leave in this country, and finally to retire from the service on pension upon a medical certificate from the 21st April 1887.

59. Mr. George St. Patrick Lawrence Gibson, Deputy Conservator of Forests, 2nd Grade, was away on furlough to Europe throughout the year, and resumed charge of his duties as Divisional Forest Officer of West Khándesh on the 31st March 1887. On the 18th May following, this officer had the misfortune of being attacked in the Navápur forests by a tigress, which had taken to killing human life, and which he was tracking up with a view to the accomplishment of her destruction; and though he mortally wounded her when she charged out upon him, still she contrived to bite him in the left arm and leg as she fell dead upon him knocking him down. Mr. Gibson was conveyed to Bombay by Colonel Pullan, Deputy Superintendent of Survey, and was tended with the greatest care at the European General Hospital, but unfortunately he sank, and died on the 13th July 1887 from the effects of the wounds he had received from the tigress. By his death Government have lost an active and energetic Forest Officer, whose sympathies were always with the people, especially the wild tribes of the forest districts, where he was employed, and who evinced great regard for him.

60. Mr. R. S. Fagan, 4th Grade Deputy Conservator of Forests, was absent on leave all the year through.

61. Of the class Sub-Assistant Conservators there are 7 appointments assigned to the Northern Circle; and they have all been occupied throughout the year.

62. Mr. Govind Rámchander Mahájan, an excellent officer, of whom special mention was made in paragraph 172 of the administration report of last year, proceeded on sick leave on the 9th March from the Sátára District, and died not long afterwards. Government have thus lost a very hard-working, honest loyal, and able Native officer.

63. The numerical strength and constitution of the subordinate forest protective establishment has remained unchanged, their monthly cost amounts to Rs. 21,503, and their distribution among the different divisions is as under:—

No.	Forest Divisions.	Number of Ranges.	RANGE FOREST OFFICERS.						Forest Guards.						Remarks.	
			Rangers.				Foresters.									
			Rs. 100	Rs. 80	Rs. 60	Rs. 50	Rs. 40	Rs. 30	Rs. 20	Rs. 15	Rs. 12	Rs. 10	Rs. 9	Rs. 8		Rs. 7
1	North Thána	6								6	14	25	25	70	80	The pay of the rangers and foresters is personal, and the men are transferred from one range to another and from one division to another as the exigencies of the service may require. Therefore the number of appointments in each grade is shown in lump for the whole circle.
2	South Thána	8								8	14	25	25	70	115	
3	East Khándesh	13								8	16	20	20	40	75	
4	West Khándesh	10								7	14	18	18	50	102	
5	Násik	14								10	20	25	26	50	158	
6	Ahmednagar	11	3	4	6	12	20	30	30	6	12	22	22	50	85	
7	Poona	11								9	17	26	25	60	120	
8	Sátára	14	These officers are subject to transfer from one Division to another.							9	18	24	22	57	102	
9	Sholápur	7								3	6	11	8	16	68	
10	Surat	5								2	4	4	6	18	27	
11	Panch Mahál	5								2	5	10	10	30	48	
Total		95	3	4	6	12	20	30	30	70	140	210	205	511	980	

64. In the Poona Forest Division a temporary establishment of 15 forest guards on Rs. 8 each, and 30 forest guards on Rs. 7 each, is retained all the

year round, in addition to the permanent staff, for the proper protection of the forests, which would otherwise suffer from defective conservancy owing to insufficient numerical strength.

65. The Divisional Forest Officer, North Thána, reports that much inconvenience still continues to be felt in consequence of the reduction made, last year, of 39 forest guards; and experience has shown that the measure was not of sound economy, for several notable cases of robberies have occurred in both forest divisions of the Thána District, the establishments being too few in numbers to guard effectively the forest estates, which are open on all sides to be depredated by a large section of the population, who subsist mainly upon wood-stealing, and are incited by timber-dealers to prey on the forests and upon the Government timber on occupied lands.

66. The Divisional Forest Officer, West Khándesh, reports that, on an average, the beat guards in his district have an area of about 5,700 acres of forest to protect and look after in other ways, and that a "Forest Beat" of this size is clearly too large for one forest guard to watch and tend properly.

67. The Divisional Forest Officer, Panch Maháls, remarks that where the subordinate protective establishment is almost numerically sufficient, as in Godhra and Kálol, there the general protection of the forests from thefts is fair. In Dohad, Jhálod, and Hálol the present establishment is not large enough to efficiently protect the areas under its charge, protection in many cases is indifferent, and the forests suffer accordingly.

68. A large number of forest subordinates has been punished by dismissal from the service during the year. In the North Thána Division the Range Forest Officer of Umbargaon, 4 round guards, and 5 beat guards have suffered for dishonesty; a former range forest officer of the South Thána Division, who was under suspension at the commencement of the year, was dismissed in connection with the Kalyán teak robberies, and 2 round guards likewise shared his fate. In the Násik Division 1 ranger on Rs. 100 pay, 1 range forest officer, 5 round and 1 beat guard have been discharged the service for connection with frauds and complicity in forest thefts, and in the Ahmednagar Division a range forest officer was dismissed for embezzlement of grazing fees. In every case, where appeal has been made to Government against the conviction and the sentence of dismissal finally passed by the Conservator, the justice of the conviction has been recognized, and the sentence has been upheld. The office establishments in entertainment and distribution during the year are given in the following table, which exhibits their monthly cost. There have been no serious offences among the members of this branch, and the work performed by them has been very creditable to all:—

No.	List of Offices.	NUMBER AND GRADATIONS.											Monthly Cost.
		Clerks.								Peons.			
		Rs. 100	Rs. 80	Rs. 60	Rs. 50	Rs. 40	Rs. 30	Rs. 20	Rs. 15	Rs. 10	Rs. 9	Rs. 8	
													Rs.
1	Conservator's or "Direction."	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	...	1	1	5	579
2	North Thána Divisional...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	2	...	1	3	203
3	South Thána do.	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	2	...	1	3	203
4	East Khándesh do.	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	2	...	1	3	183
5	West Khándesh do.	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	2	...	1	3	183
6	Násik do.	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	2	...	1	3	183
7	Ahmednagar do.	...	...	...	...	1	1	2	2	...	1	3	173
8	Poona do.	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	2	...	1	3	183
9	Sátára do.	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	2	...	1	3	183
10	Sholápur do.	...	...	...	...	1	1	2	1	...	1	3	158
11	Surat do.	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	2	...	1	3	183
12	Panch Maháls do.	...	...	...	...	1	1	2	1	...	1	3	158
13	7 Sub-Assistant Conservators, Sub-divisional	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	14	217
	Total	1	1	1	10	7	13	22	27	1	12	52	2,789

69. The total expenditure incurred upon forest establishments during the year has amounted to Rs. 4,53,218-1-5 :—

	Rs.	a.	p.
B. I. a.—Conservator's salary	18,000	0	0
B. II. a.—Conservator's travelling allowance	2,400	0	0
B. I. b.—Superior officers' salary	95,734	14	5
B. II. b.—Superior officers' travelling allowance	27,489	8	6
B. I. c.—Subordinate Protective Establishment salary .	2,46,901	13	7
B. II. c.—Subordinate Protective Establishment travelling allowance	13,924	12	8
B. I. d.—Office Establishments' salary	32,676	8	8
B. II. d.—Office Establishments' travelling allowance ...	12,199	4	3
A. VIII. f.—Cost of Temporary Establishment	3,891	3	4
Total ...	4,53,218	1	5

3)—GENERAL PROTECTION AND BREACHES OF FOREST LAWS.

70. The following table shows the number and result of prosecutions of forest offences in the year under report and in previous years, respectively :—

No.	Divisions.	1885-86.		1886-87.		Percentages of Failures.	
		Prosecutions.	Acquittals.	Prosecutions.	Acquittals.	1885-86.	1886-87
1	North Thána	18	11	42	10	61·1	23·8
2	South Thána	97	57	81	28	58·7	34·5
3	East Khándesh	46	13	25	9	28·2	36·
4	West Khándesh	44	16	53	21	36·3	39·6
5	Násik	35	8	150	18	22·8	12·
6	Ahmednagar	122	38	146	64	31·1	43·8
7	Poona	230	51	99	24	22·1	24·2
8	Sátára	42	17	87	71	40·4	81·7
9	Sholápur	36	21	88	25	58·3	28·4
10	Surat	24	...	4	2	...	50·
11	Panch Maháls	53	13	36	6	24·5	16·6
	Total ...	747	245	811	278	32·7	34·2

71. There were 57 cases, not disposed of, from last year at the beginning of this year. Of the 533 cases tried during the year, in respect of which convictions were obtained, 1,250 individuals were sentenced to punishment of different descriptions and degrees. The 278 cases acquitted affected 678 individuals, and at the close of the year 85 cases were standing over for completion of magisterial proceedings: they were distributed as under :—

South Thána 13 cases	Ahmednagar 14 cases.
East Khándesh 3 „	Poona 3 „
West Khándesh 38 „	Sátára 2 „
Násik 6 „	Sholápur 6 „

72. The percentage of failures in forest cases will always be high where the witnesses are chiefly fellow-villagers of the accused, who, in the interval between the discovery of the offence and the trial, are prone to be forgetful of the facts that came under their observation, and are found more ready to give evidence in favour of the accused than against him, and at variance with the account they originally gave of the transaction.

73. The forest offences in respect of which prosecutions have been instituted during the year, classified under the four different heads of crime prescribed by the Forest Department Code, appear as under :—